

In Gethsemane
Mark 14:32-51

Courage is admitting your cowardice in the face of suffering.

When we think of Maundy Thursday several things come to mind:

- The Lord's Supper-New Covenant
- Judas leaves to betray Jesus.
- Garden of Gethsemane prayer.
- Jesus arrested in the Garden.
- Taken before the High Priests, Herod and Pilate
- Horribly Beaten, sadistically mocked and totally humiliated.

We talk about this night, Maundy Thursday, as the night of betrayal and humiliation at the hands of Jesus' enemies.

Think for a moment: Who are your enemies?

You may say, "Pastor, I don't have any enemies."

Most of us would say, "Hey, that's super, you must be a great person."

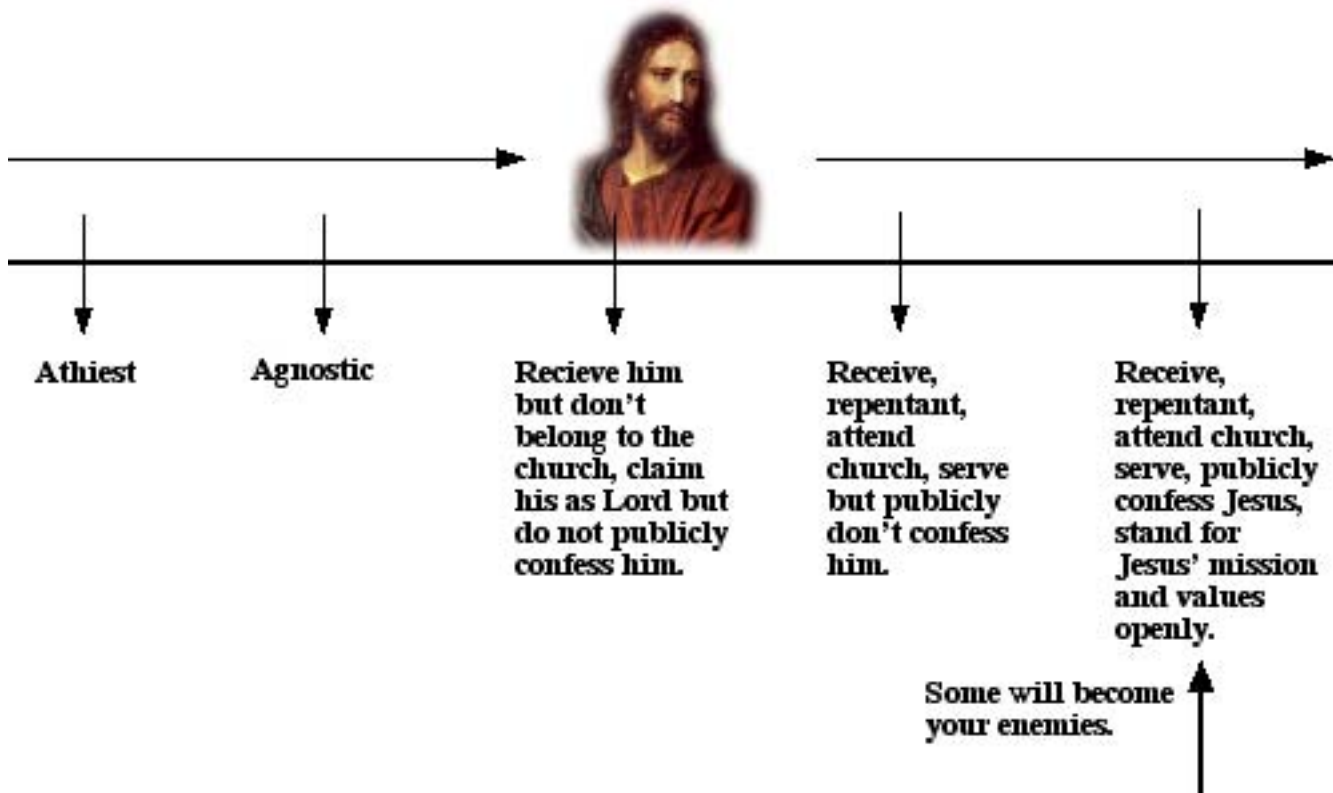
But what would Jesus say? "No enemies, then you must not stand for anything?"

Granted, most people create enemies as result of our foolishness, sins, and or stupidity.

Jesus however points out that if you stand for him you will have enemies as a result. Unfortunately some of them will be part of your own family.

Matt. 10:34 "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. 36 And a person's enemies will be those of his own household.

Where do you stand on the scale of life in response to Jesus? **GRAPHIC**



Where you stand today makes all the difference in how you live, what you live for, your worldview and your eternal destination.

Jesus' obedience

32 And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." 33 And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. 34 And he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch." 35 And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." 37 And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? 38 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." 39 And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. 40 And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were

very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. 41 And he came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”

We get a glimpse into the character of Jesus.

He does not want to suffer and die.

He does not want to be beaten to a bloody pulp.

He has all the characteristics of any person in wanting to live.

However, in the garden he prays *“Yet not what I will, but what you will.”*

Jesus’ undoubtedly displayed the greatest courage ever seen on the earth.

Why do I know this: Personal Experience.

Cut two of my fingers to the bone.

Emergency ward-Dr. told me:

I going have to put three shots in each fingertip.

It is going to hurt like you’ve never hurt before.

Sorry but I have to deaden the nerve.

He was right: “It hurt worse than anything I have ever experienced and yes, I have had kidney stones.”

Here is the point: “If I had known the level of pain I was going to experience I probably would have found a thousand excuses to avoid it.”

Jesus knew exactly what he was getting into.

He knew the pain he was going to face.

He knew that the sin of the universe would be absorbed into his being.

Knowing all this—he still went forward to die for our healing of shame, guilt and sin. AMAZING!

II. Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

43 And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. 44 Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.” 45 And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” And he kissed him. 46 And they laid hands on him and seized him. 47 But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. 48 And Jesus said to them, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? 49 Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled.”

Judas and the crowd with him are the opposite of courage.

Cowards like to do their dirty deeds in the dark.

Either the dark of night or the dark of manipulation and confusion beset with lies and deception.

Cowards also like to come with “the crowd.”

Judas brought along *a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.*

In other words he brought a small army!

Cowards operate best when they can rally others around them to do their dirty work.

Vs. 47 tell us that someone with Jesus drew a sword and cut off the ear of the High Priest's servant.

John 18:10 *Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) 11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"*

Luke 22:50 *And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. 51 But Jesus said, "No more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him.*

Incredible: Jesus is facing beating and imminent death but he still has time to heal the severed ear of Malchus.

That is the difference between the cowardly and the courageous.

Cowards think only of themselves.

The Courageous think of others.

50 *And they all left him and fled. 51 And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, 52 but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.*

There are many theories about these three verses.

The one that I believe has the greatest credibility is this:

The young man in the garden was a young Mark-the author of the Gospel of Mark.

The verse is self-deprecating. Not something we would expect to hear about.

At the same time it gives Mark great credibility to anyone who would read his Gospel and knew the story of Mark running away naked.

Mark is also a great reminder of what can happen to all of us when terror takes over our hearts rather than faith.

Mark panicked and ran, even to the point of losing his clothing in the process.

I would make an intelligent guess that Mark, when he panicked, stopped looking to Jesus and ran for his life.

How much like Mark are you and me?

When life throws the worst at us, when troubles come at us like an avalanche, when we realize we are losing control.....it is easy to take our eyes off Jesus and panic.

We have, unfortunately bought into a westernize gospel that promises wealth, health, protection and the good life for those who trust in Jesus.

You could not prove that by the life of the apostles:

Simon surnamed Peter died 33-34 years after the death of Christ.

According to the early writers, he died at or about the same time with Paul, during Nero's persecution, A.D. 67,68.

All agree that he was crucified. Origen says that Peter felt himself to be unworthy to be put to death in the same manner as his Master, and was therefore, at his own request, crucified with his head downward."

James the son of Zebedee: He was put to death by Herod Agrippa I shortly before the day of the Passover, in the year 44 or about 11 years after the death of Christ. From Acts 12: 1-2.

Matthew: There is a legend that he died a martyr in Ethiopia

James Alpheus : We know he lived at least five years after the death of Christ because of mentions in the Bible. According to tradition, James son of

Alpheus was thrown down from the temple by the scribes and Pharisees; he was then stoned, and his brains dashed out with a fuller's club.

When troubles, heartaches, pain and rejection come into our lives we can attempt to run away like Mark and curse the Lord for not taking care of us.

Or we can, like Jesus, accept these troubles and another way to mature into the image of our Lord.

Yellow Card:

___ Tonight I will admit to myself and Jesus that I would rather run than stand up for the truth of Jesus Christ.

___ I will ask Jesus for his courage so that I never run away again.

___ I will seek to spend the rest of my life standing for Jesus both publicly and privately.